GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
RURAL DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5439
ANSWERED ON:13.12.2010
WASTELAND IN COASTAL AREAS
Dashmunsi Deepa

Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the names of the States where Integrated Wasteland Development Programme is under implementation as on date;

(b) the details of projects implemented and the areas of wasteland brought under cultivation during the last three years, year-wise and State-wise; and

(c) the steps taken/proposed to be taken by the Government to make wasteland more cultivable particularly in the coastal areas in the country during 2009-2010 and 2010-2011?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI SISIR KUMAR ADHIKARI)

(a) & (b): Projects under Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP) have been sanctioned in all the 28 States of the country, since 1995-96 till 2006-07. IWDP along with two other area development programmes viz., Desert Development Programme (DDP) and Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP), has been consolidated and integrated into a single modified programme called Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP) with effect from 26.02.2009. No new projects under IWDP have been sanctioned since 2007-08 (i.e. during last three years and current year. However, names of the States and the details of the projects sanctioned under IWMP during last year & current year are at Annexure.

A project on Wasteland Change Analysis between 2005-06 and 2008-09 has been given by the Department of Land Resources to National Remote Sensing Centre, Hyderabad to understand the dynamics of wastelands through comparison of spatial statistics. This study will enable the Department to assess the extent of wastelands converted to cultivable land between these two periods. However, the assessment of yearwise acreage of wasteland converted to cultivable land is not feasible through this study.

(c) The Department of Land Resources has been implementing three area development schemes viz., Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP), Desert Development Programme (DDP) and Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP) on watershed basis since 1995-96. The Technical Committee on Drought Prone Areas Programme (DPAP), Desert Development Programme (DDP) and Integrated Wastelands Development Programme (IWDP), under the chairmanship of Shri S. Parthasarathy (2006), addressed major issues in watershed programmes and recommended viable strategies and mechanisms for effective implementation of these programmes. Based on the suggestions of the Committee, National Rainfed Area Authority (NRAA), in coordination with Planning Commission, formulated Common Guidelines for Watershed Development Projects, 2008 to give an impetus to watershed development programmes. The Department of Land Resources integrated the three area development programmes into a single modified programme called ?Integrated Watershed Management Programme (IWMP)? with effect from 26.02.2009 to be implemented under these guidelines. The main aims of IWMP are harnessing, conserving and developing degraded natural resources such as soil, vegetative cover and water; prevention of soil run-off; rain water harvesting and recharging of the ground water table; increasing the productivity of crops; introduction of multi-cropping and diverse agro-based activities; promoting sustainable livelihoods and increasing the household incomes. Under IWMP, the projects are selected based upon certain criteria for prioritization. They are:-

Poverty index, % of SC/ ST population, Actual wages, % of small and marginal farmers, Ground water status, Moisture index, Area under rain-fed agriculture, Drinking water, Degraded land, Productivity potential of the land, Contiguity to another watershed that has already been developed/ treated and Cluster approach.

There is no special provision for taking up coastal areas for development under watershed programmes. Any area including coastal area, satisfying the above criteria of prioritization, qualifies for treatment under IWMP.